

## With the First Nighters

"MARIA ROSA."

Even the rapturists who have been accustomed to commingle their cheers with the siren lit of Florence the hunted, were scarcely prepared for the weight of the blow which came when Miss Roberts and her cohorts dished out the Spanish omelet "Maria Rosa," from which the lady emerged gory and triumphant after stabbing to the heart the villain who died gurgling, "I killed the foreman," and he might have appropriately added, "There'll be no strike tonight."

There is nothing clean, there is nothing decent, there is absolutely nothing in this patch work of low peasant life that is not unlovely, and one instinctively wonders after each new production this lady essays if it is the fault of her managers in selecting such plays or if the woman is incapable of doing justice to anything containing some suggestion of the sweet things in life.

Certainly "Maria Rosa" is deplorable.

Even with all of its ylleness, and the low portraiture with which it is replete, there might be a situation tense enough to repay a vigilant audience for its trouble, but there is not one line, one situation that is not only unattractive but which is absolutely repellant, and the construction of the vehicle is ragged beyond description.

Thurlow Bergen, who is a splendid actor, and who works like a Trojan to make something of the miserable thing, is entitled to the highest praise, but that sweet dash of lavender, Lucius Henderson, who takes the part of the village taster entering to try the porridge, and leaving after having sipped the broth at the wedding supper is as close to the limit as any young man gets during the brief period of his natural existence.

Lucius would make the death scene of Oliver Twist resemble a cotillion figure, and the proper place for him would be head usher in a manicure establishment.

It is said of Olga Nethersole that none of the problem features of her plays are "either omitted or lost." Very well, Olga is a specialist on problems, but even Miss Nethersole, I think would balk at a play devoid of the interest that sometimes attaches to the problem variety by calling things by their right names, and losing their piquancy in the filth of their realities.

If "Maria Rosa" shall prove to be a success, surely the theatre going public is thirsty for a sight of the red corpuscles.

In all justice it must be said that Miss Roberts acted the part just as a peasant might have lived it, with the stolid indifference peculiar to the ignorant, with a gleam of vengeance and treachery in her furtive eyes, and all the grossness that would be indicative of such a woman.

To find any fault with the Roberts' portrayal of "Maria Rosa" would be passing the bounds of fair criticism for the lady seemed admirably suited to the part, even if the play was a cause for a shudder and an involuntary remark such as "nothing like that in my family."

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"The Strength of the Weak" has been greatly

improved during its recess in the New York metropolis.

Not only has the play undergone beneficial changes, but the star herself is better gowned, her play, weak as it is, commands more attention, and there is a certain veneer covering it all that comes only with the criticism of the cities.

As Pauline Darcy, Florence Roberts has learned. The part means more to her, and to us who witness it, in fact, she has a chance to make good if she would attempt nothing else.

Ruth Allen, as the athletic girl, is still wearing the medals, and this talented young lady will wait many days before she connects with a part

business, was variously entertained by his friends, while the company was here.

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ORPHEUM.

That the management of the Orpheum, which we understand is fresh and amateurish, should open the doors of that little house, and deign to accept the simoleons of a gullible public for such a show as that which is romping the boards this week is hardly believable, yet the portals have been thrown wide, and the money has been collected from the loyal theatre goers just as if the performance was worth the price.

Leave out the "4-Lukens-4" and what is left of the rest of the show is a disgrace to the circuit.



Cheridah Simpson, in "Red Feather"

so suitable to her healthful, robust nature.

Thurlow Bergen, the best leading man Florence Roberts ever had, was perfect as Richard Adams, and Jay Williams as the Baron was so far ahead of Max Figman as the eccentric German with pink hair that there was no comparison.

But enter the floorwalker, Lushius Henderson, and that spoiled many things. A Florence Roberts show is usually a scream, and in this regard "The Strength of the Weak" differed little.

E. V. Groux, general manager of Miss Roberts, and probably the most popular man in the

The Lukens are good, they are more than that, they are headliners for any variety show in the world, but just why Morpheus should be robbed of converts in order to allow the others to cavort through their several firesome acts is far beyond human understanding.

Belle Gordon, the athletic girl, is there with a collection of biceps that would make the most heroic bachelor ponder over the matrimonial chance, and she is followed by Carl Robisch and Mayme Childress, who in team work are about as funny as a crutch.

Edward Gray, the tall tale teller, stands in

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